

The
Melville Society
N E W S L E T T E R

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The annual meeting of the Society will be held in the Cabinet Room of the Mayflower Hotel, Washington, D.C., on Friday morning, December 28, from 9:15 to 10:45 o'clock. President Nathalia Wright has announced that the general theme of this year's program will be *The Piazza Tales*, for which 1956 is the centennial year. While a portion of the program has been arranged, there is still room for any member who wishes to volunteer a paper on a subject related to our general theme. Communications should be addressed to Miss Wright at Box 346, Maryville, Tennessee.

Incidentally, the time of the meeting was chosen with the thought that members will want to attend the meetings of the American Studies Association on Thursday afternoon (2:00 to 3:30), the American Literature Group on Friday (beginning at 11:00 A.M.), and the American Drama conference (also on Thursday afternoon).

HONORARY MEMBERS

The executive committee has recently elected to honorary membership, upon nomination by Luther S. Mansfield, two eminent South American scholars. They are Dr. Jorge Luis Borges of the National University of Buenos Aires and Don Manuel Mujica Lainez, Director General of Cultural Relations of the Ministry of Foreign and Cultural Relations in Buenos Aires.

Dr. Borges is the director of the Institute of English and North American Literature, a member of the faculty of philosophy and letters at the University of Buenos Aires, and director of the National Library of Argentina.

Lainez, besides his position in the government, is a widely read novelist of Argentina and also writes literary and musical criticism for *La Nacion*. Both men have long been interested in Melville and his works.

WILSON ILLUSTRATIONS

The secretary has received for safekeeping two original colored illustrations of *Moby-Dick* (unframed) from the series painted by Gil Wilson and presented by the artist to the Society. Included also is a certificate for the series of colored slides made from these illustrations.

The question of permanent arrangements for the disposal or use of these items has not yet been decided by the executive committee. Wilson, in making the gift, suggested that the paintings be sold at auction and the funds placed in the Society's treasury. Some indications of interest in the purchase of the two illustrations have been received by the secretary. On the other hand, several members have objected to any action which would hamper in any way the accessibility of these materials as teaching aids. It has been proposed therefore, that the illustrations and the slides be placed on deposit in the Berkshire Athenaeum, ownership being retained by the Society, with the understanding that members might borrow them from time to time for display or for teaching purposes.

This is one of the questions which ought to be decided at our annual meeting. As yet the Berkshire Athenaeum has not been consulted as to whether it would accept the custody of these items under the conditions proposed.

Enclosed with the *Newsletter* is a list of the various articles on display in the Melville Room of the Athenaeum as of March, 1955. Incidentally, the secretary paid a visit to the room during the past summer and was pleasantly surprised by the growing collection and the manner in which it is being cared for. The Melville Room, officially sponsored by the Society, is rapidly becoming an important center for Melville studies. Future scholars will have reason to be grateful to those of our members who have donated materials of interest and importance to the Melville collection. The mimeograph inventory has been supplied through the kindness of our former president, Harrison Hayford.

NOTES

The Cornell University Press published (September 17) *Tragedy: A View of Life*, by Henry Alonzo Myers. This contains a chapter on "The Tragic Meaning of *Moby Dick*."

The Harris-Seybold Company of 4510 East 71st Street, Cleveland 5, Ohio, is issuing a large 1957 calendar with interesting colored illustrations of *Moby-Dick* by Everett Henry. Free copies are available while the supply lasts.

The Harvard University Press will publish *Melville as Lecturer*, by Merton M. Sealts. This book will consider both the story of Melville's lecture tours and their public reception and an analysis of the lectures themselves in relation to his other writing. The study of their content was made possible by partially reconstructing the text from newspaper summaries, which for two of the lectures ("Statues in Rome" and "The South Seas") were remarkably full, detailed, and consistent. The exact date of publication has not been announced.

The Raven and the Whale, by Perry Miller, was published on May 2 by Harcourt, Brace and Company. A description of the book, prepared by its publisher, accompanies this issue of the *Newsletter*.

Film Music, official publication of the National Film Music Council (11 East 87th Street, New York City, 28), includes in its Summer, 1956, issue an article by Phillip Sauton on "The Music for *Moby Dick*."

The book review section of the New York *Herald Tribune* for July 22, 1956, contains an interesting and imaginative commentary on Melville's reputation by John K. Hutchens entitled "Field Report on Mr. Melville's New One."

Luther S. Mansfield has been lecturing in Argentina for four months as visiting professor of United States literature at the University of Buenos Aires. This contribution to intercultural relations was made possible through our State Department's International Educational Exchange program.

According to word received from the New York University Press, *Melville's Whaling Years*, by Wilson L. Heflin, has been delayed for perhaps another year.

Harrison Hayford and Gordon Roper, who are preparing an annotated check-list of writings by and about Melville, plan to organize the material in three main sections. The first will provide a calendar of Melville's works. The second will be a bibliography of books, articles, and dissertations dealing with Melville. The third will consist of a classified bibliography of books and articles on the individual works of Melville, arranged in chronological order. There will also be an author index.

A new comic-strip version of *Moby-Dick*, divided into twenty-eight episodes, has been appearing in several American newspapers in the "Dickie Dare" series by Coulton Waugh.

Sidney Kaplan sends word of an announcement regarding the publication of *Moby-Dick* which appeared in the Utica (N. Y.) *Daily Gazette* for November 19, 1951. This announcement reads in part as follows:

"This new novel by the author of 'Typee,' 'Omoo,' etc., is pronounced the best written and most entertaining of his works. This is certainly strong praise, for few authors have succeeded in getting up stories of deeper interest, narrated in a more attractive style. The hero of this story is a Whale, to which the one that sunk the Ann Alexander was a calf. It will be seen that the subject is one affording the finest fields for the rich imaginative powers and sea-faring experience of the author."

In connection with the opening of the motion picture *Moby Dick* in Pittsfield during the first week in August, the Berkshire Athenaeum sponsored a series of activities aimed at stimulating interest in Melville and his works. Robert G. Newman, librarian, was interviewed in the Melville Room for the Springfield (Mass.) television station, WWLP. He also discussed Melville's life in Pittsfield and something about the Athenaeum's collection of Melville's items over the Yankee Radio Network (27 New England stations). A recorded invitation to visit the Athenaeum was presented at each performance of the film. Special exhibits and other activities were arranged by the library staff.

What are the most recent developments in the field of Melville scholarship in your part of the country (or the world)? The secretary would appreciate hearing from you. Since the purpose of the *Newsletter* is to report interesting events in the field for the information of all members, items of useful or entertaining news should be sent to the secretary as soon as possible for inclusion in future issues of this periodical.

THE *Melville Society* NEWSLETTER
IS PUBLISHED QUARTERLY FOR MEMBERS OF THE
Melville Society, a group of literary scholars and others interested
in the life and works of Herman Melville. The Society seeks to
facilitate the exchange of information among its members, to
stimulate the study of Melville's life and works, and to encourage
literary, historical, and bibliographical research. Membership is
two dollars per year and includes all services of the Society. Asso-
ciate membership (non-voting) is one dollar per year and includes
all issues of the Newsletter. Address Tyrus Hillway, secretary, at
Colorado State College, Greeley, Colorado.